

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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EA FOR SHERMAN ONLY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: MARR, JA

SUBJ: SOUTH KOREAN DEFENSES

1. FOLLOWING CABLE WAS SENT IN MILITARY CHANNELS AS A RESULT OF AN INQUIRY FROM MORTON ABRAMOWITZ TO DIA WHICH THEN ASKED DATT TOKYO TO COMMENT ON THE STATUS OF FOREIGN MINISTRY ACCESS TO U.S. MILITARY INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS OF THE SOUTH KOREAN CAPABILITY TO HANDLE A NORTH KOREAN ATTACK AND ON FONOFF CONCERN ABOUT THIS CAPABILITY.

BEGIN TEXT:

2. FOREIGN MINISTER AND DEFENSE MINISTER WERE BRIEFED ON GENERAL NORTH KOREAN CAPABILITIES AND ROK STATE OF PREPAREDNESS DURING EARLY JUNE CINCPAC VISIT.

3. DURING US-JAPANESE MILITARY SERVICE INTEL EXCHANGE PROGRAM, FEW INQUIRIES ARE MADE CONCERNING ROK CAPABILITIES. PRIMARY INTEREST CENTERS ON NE ASIAN COMMUNIST ORDER OF BATTLE.

4. CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN JAPANESE AND ROK MILITARY INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS ARE ONCE AGAIN IN FULL SWING. ROK J-2, HOSTED
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BY JAPANESE COUNTERPART, HAS JUST COMPLETED EXTENSIVE TOUR OF JAPANESE MILITARY INSTALLATIONS.

5. JGSO G2 DURING 16 JUNE GEN WEYAND CALL STATED THAT AS RE-

SULT OF VISIT TO ROK EARLY JUNE, HE CONSIDERED THE SITUATION THERE WELL UNDER CONTROL. THAT WITH THE SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT OF U.S. FORCES IN KOREA ANY CURRENT NK THREAT COULD BE MET. HE FELT THAT WHILE ROK WERE CONCERNED WITH U.S. CREDIBILITY DURING FINAL COLLAPSE OF SVN AND AS RESULT OF KIM IL SUNG VISIT TO PEKING, CONFIDENCE WAS RESTORED BY MAYAGUEZ ACTION AND FORCEFUL STATEMENTS BY PRESIDENT, SECSTATE, CINCPAC, AND OTHERS.

6. DATT HAS MET WITH JAPANESE ATTACHES IN SEOUL, WHO APPEARED TO BE KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT ROK ORDER OF BATTLE. FREQUENT REPORTS ON THIS SUBJECT ARE MADE TO FOREIGN OFFICE BY THEM.

7. SEVERAL FOREIGN OFFICE RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS BUREAU OFFICIALS NOT DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN MILITARY MATTERS OR IN INTELLIGENCE EXCHANGES AND A QTE MILITARY EXPERT UNQTE WHO RECENTLY VISITED SEOUL EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT QTE SERIOUS INADEQUACIES UNQTE IN ROK DEFENSIVE CAPABILITY, COMMAND ORGANIZATION, PROFESSIONAL MILITARY AND POPULAR MORALE, AND CORRUPTION WITHIN MILITARY. FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS ACKNOWLEDGED LIKELIHOOD OF A NATURAL BIAS IN THEIR JUDGMENTS, LACK OF ADEQUATE OPPORTUNITY TO OBSERVE ROK DEFENSE ARRANGEMENTS, AND THEIR PROFESSIONAL INCOMPETENCE TO REACH SOUND CONCLUSIONS. IT WAS THIS EXPRESSED CONCERN WHICH APPARENTLY TRIGGERED INQUIRY BY DASD.

8. IT IS KNOWN THAT FOREIGN OFFICE NOT WELL KNIT INTO INTELLIGENCE EXCHANGE PROGRAMS THAT ALREADY EXIST. OBVIOUSLY, SOME INPUT ON KOREA MILITARY SITUATION AND ROK CAPABILITIES WOULD BE OF INTEREST TO THEM IN RELATION TO PROJECTS NOW BEING IMPLEMENTED OR PLANNED FOR, WHICH WOULD REQUIRE SOME KNOWLEDGE OF KOREAN MILITARY SITUATION.

9. EMBASSY CAN TAKE STEPS TO RECOMMEND THAT PERTINENT DATA ON KOREA WHICH NOW EXISTS WITHIN THE JAPANESE MILITARY INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY BE PASSED TO COGNIZANT FONOFF OFFICIALS.

10. IT IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT APPROPRIATE US INTELLIGENCE BE MADE DIRECTLY AVAILABLE TO FOREIGN OFFICE BECAUSE OF CURRENT SIGNIFICANCE OF KOREA IN GOJ SECURITY POLICY DISCUSSIONS. IT WOULD BE MOST USEFUL TO OFFER A DETAILED BRIEFING TO SELECTED KEY OFFICERS AT THE FOREIGN OFFICE. EMBASSY STRONGLY CONCURS WITH THIS RECOMMENDATION.

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11. IT WOULD BE WELL WORTH THE EFFORT TO SEND A DIA/CINCPAC BRIEFING TEAM TO JAPAN FOR THIS PURPOSE. WHILE THE BRIEFING WOULD HAVE TO BE TAILORED TO SOME EXTENT FOR NON-MILITARY FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS, IT SHOULD INCLUDE ALL RELEASABLE DETAILS ON KOREAN ORDER OF BATTLE, DISPOSITION OF ALL FORCES, AND ROK/US DEFENSIVE PLANS AND CONCEPTS. IN THIS MANNER, US/ROK CREDIBILITY CAN BE ENHANCED AND NORTH KOREAN INADEQUACIES

CLEARLY REFLECTED. END TEXT.

HODGSON

SECRET

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